

A SOCIALIST COMMENTARY ON COLONIAL AFFAIRS

# Venture

JOURNAL OF THE FABIAN COLONIAL BUREAU

VOL. 4 No. 3

APRIL, 1952

MONTHLY 6d

## Comment

Incorporating Empire

### THE GOLD COAST ANSWERS MALAN

THE best possible answer to Dr. Malan has been given by the decision to raise the status of the Leader of Government Business in the Gold Coast to that of Prime Minister. Mr. Nkrumah will not—it is true—have all the powers of the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. He will still have three *ex-officio* members in his Government, and external relations will remain beyond its competence, but an important change has been made in the method of choosing Ministers which in effect raises the Council of Ministers to the level of a Cabinet.\* The change demonstrates the confidence of the British Government in the Gold Coast, which stands out in bright contrast against the gloomy view expressed by Dr. Malan on March 4:—

'Democracy is an excellent system, but if democracy is to be applied in the circumstances of the Gold Coast, then democracy ultimately will destroy itself. How can people with so little civilisation and so little knowledge carry the responsibility of governing themselves democratically? It cannot be done. Ultimately it will lead to dictatorship or a return to barbarism.'

The 'return to barbarism' is certainly proceeding on very unfamiliar lines! Any fair examination of the year's record in the Gold Coast leads to quite opposite conclusions. What has the Gold Coast Government in fact been doing?

Its most remarkable effort is being concentrated on education. Gold Coast legislators do not need Dr. Malan to tell them of the dangers and hardships of illiteracy. Many have themselves suffered from lack of educational opportunity. Most of those who have enjoyed higher education worked hard and long to pay for it themselves, including the new Prime Minister. They know, and they *feel*, that

the future of their country depends on its schools. The Accelerated Plan for Education and the Plan for Mass Literacy and Mass Education are to provide the foundation for this future. Already tuition fees have been abolished in primary schools, though parents must continue to pay for books and stationery. The aim is to provide a six-year basic course for every child at public expense, concentrating on achieving permanent literacy in the local vernacular and English. There are expansion plans also for secondary and technical education, and for teaching adults to read and write. Mass education in a broader sense is to follow, for it is realised that the educated children will become detached from their elders unless these also are literate and 'imbued with active notions of what they themselves can do to help in improving rural life.' These plans are not daydreams. The people have been told that they cannot materialise all at once, that they have to be paid for, and that local communities, not a far-away Government, must carry the responsibility of implementing them. It has been recognised that some fall in standards is inevitable, but emergency measures are being taken to train new teachers and the uncertificated teachers already in the schools. It is estimated that enrolment of children will expand from 270,000 in January, 1952, to 405,000 in 1957, and the number of teachers required from 9,000 to 13,500.

Education is to carry with it greater responsibility. Expatriate recruitment to the Administrative Service has been closed. New African officials are being appointed. But the people must make an effort themselves. Elections for new local government bodies are now to be held. District, urban and local councils will be established, required by law to impose a basic rate to be paid by everyone over 18, and empowered to impose other rates and taxes in accordance with local circumstances. 'Nobody likes paying rates,' said the Minister of Local Government in a broadcast explanation to

\* Full details are given on page 6.

the people, 'but you must accept your fair share of the burden and be prepared to pay a reasonable rate in return for the services which your Council will provide.' This is surely the voice of democracy rather than barbarism?

Equally remarkable is the 'New Deal for Cocoa' campaign. All the resources of the Public Relations Department are being used to warn farmers of the danger of swollen shoot disease in their crop. Ministers and Members of the Legislative Assembly, national and local party leaders, voluntary workers and trained teams, are touring the country with film vans, leaflets, and recordings in five vernacular languages. This campaign is even more encouraging than the drive for education, for the speakers are telling the farmers something they don't want to hear. Moreover, many of the leaders are eating their own words, spoken when they were in opposition. While it is true that the local government reforms, like the constitutional changes, were planned in advance by the Coussey Committee and not by the present Government, everybody must recognise that the cocoa campaign is a striking innovation. The cocoa farmers are also being brought into active co-operation by the establishment of Regional Councils which will eventually elect representatives to a Gold Coast Farmers' Association. It is proposed to set up a Central Advisory Board on Cocoa, to include the Ministers of Agriculture and Commerce, a representative of manufacturers and shippers, and a majority of representatives of the Farmers' Association. This step, if successful, will meet the difficulty that the farmers have not hitherto spoken with one voice. It is desirable that they should do so, since the Cocoa Marketing Board controls the country's greatest single asset. Already the Cocoa Duty and Development Funds Ordinance has been passed, to provide a means of tapping this wealth for the general good. Finance is also being found from the mining industry, through the Minerals Duty Bill now under consideration, and from a rise in individual income tax. A large increase in general revenue is required to carry out the Development Plan, which has been hanging fire for several years in the Gold Coast. Here the concentration is on agriculture, communications and the development of local industries. The largest single enterprise—the Volta hydro-electric and bauxite project—will require a capital investment of £100m., which the Colony itself cannot provide.

The problems of the Gold Coast, political, economic and social, are all too obvious, and hostile critics can undoubtedly find plenty of fuel for their fire. But the co-operative efforts of African politicians and British officials are making great head-

way. If any territory in Africa is rattling back to barbarism, it is certainly not the Gold Coast!

## A MATTER OF MECHANICS

OUT of his own mouth Mr. Oliver Lyttelton has justified the Labour criticisms of his handling of Central African Federation. In the Debate in the House of Commons on March 4, he was unable to give any guarantee that the Federation scheme, which is still being bitterly opposed by Africans, would not be imposed upon them. He swept aside not only African opposition, but also Mr. James Griffiths' plea that the proposed April Conference should be postponed to allow discussion to go forward on a basis of genuine partnership. 'He has the power of making quite small events sound as if they were major matters of policy,' said Mr. Lyttelton, and 'he has lifted this matter, *which looked to me very largely a matter of mechanics*, on to another plane.' It is precisely this insensitive approach which caused the Labour Opposition to take the serious step of dividing the House, despite the pathetic pleas of the Under-Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations. This attitude, displayed in London and on the spot, is driving the Northern Rhodesian Africans towards desperate measures. A general strike, if called, will not settle the problems of Central Africa. It will undoubtedly cause great hardships amongst the workers and may endanger the tremendous progress that has been made in their trade unions. But evidently Mr. Lyttelton is prepared to take the risk. If he does so, he will get no support in this course from the Labour Party.

## WEST INDIAN FEDERATION

BY contrast with the haste and dictation with which the Central African Federal scheme is being pushed forward, West Indian federation proceeds at a leisurely Caribbean pace. First mooted in 1947, the subject is to be discussed again in London in June 'if,' says the Secretary of State in his dispatch, 'there is a general wish' to hold a Conference. So far, the principle of federation has been accepted, except in British Guiana, which has rejected it, and the Upper House in Barbados and the Legislative Council of British Honduras, both of which have still to make up their minds. The London Conference, if held, will 'seek to reach agreement on the federal scheme, in sufficient detail to enable a start to be made with the complex and lengthy process of drafting the necessary constitutional instruments.' West Indian governments, therefore, are invited to complete their study of the financial and other implications of the Report of

the Standing Closer Association Committee and to determine their attitude on the proposed Customs Union. If a Federation does emerge from this lengthy process—and we hope it will—it should at least have the support of the people who are to live in it.

### STRIKE IN MALTA

A MAJOR issue has arisen in the Malta Admiralty dockyard strike, which was called off after 16 days when the British T.U.C. made contact with the Service authorities in London. This strike of 15,000 workers in the British service departments, which aroused considerable public sympathy in Malta—including a resolution of support from the Legislative Assembly—arose from the conditions described in an article which we publish on page 8 and which was written before the strike started. The position in Malta is extremely difficult. Here, a British Government department is the largest single employer of labour in a self-governing Colony, and it has been the practice for the Service departments to fix the

rates of pay for locally recruited workers in conformity with the rates and conditions laid down by good local employers, including the Malta Government, for similar work. In January, the Malta Arbitration Tribunal awarded a 14s. weekly increase in the cost-of-living allowance for employees of the Malta Government. The Government accepted the award. The Admiralty, however, was prepared to grant only 10s. to its own employees. The strike was conducted by the General Workers Union, which is affiliated to the ICFTU, in an atmosphere of some tension. A thousand extra troops were brought in from Tripoli and 29 persons were injured in a clash in Valletta. Though the difficulties facing the British Government are obvious, it is equally obvious that this kind of incident can do no credit. It is time that some attention was paid to the disparity between conditions of servicemen and locally recruited workers in places like Malta. Similar feeling has arisen since the war in Singapore and in Aden. Malta has brought it on to the front page only because its employees have a strong union to speak for them.

*Tom Driberg, M.P.* on

### THE SUDAN

At a meeting of the Advisory Committee of the Fabian Colonial Bureau on February 27, Mr. Tom Driberg gave an account of his recent visit to the Sudan. The following condensed note of his impressions is printed with his permission.

THE first and outstanding impression is of the immense size of the country, which covers about 1m. square miles. This was originally an accidental administrative area between the Arab, desert, Moslem North and the primitive Nilotic tribes of the tropical South there is no natural unity; but some sense of nationhood is beginning to emerge, and representatives from both areas sit, and speak, in the Legislative Assembly.

In the South, the administration has so far been able to provide little more than the bare minimum of law and order. This in itself is an achievement in territory where some of the tribes had no traditional penal code of their own, where population is scattered (in the Eastern District of Equatoria Province, 76,000 people live in an area three times the size of Wales), and where some districts had no administration at all 30 years ago. Attempts are now being made to introduce rudimentary local councils and to build up public services. There are a few hospitals and the missions are doing a good job in providing schools, but it is difficult to provide services for such a thinly-spread population. There is also little economic basis—money still has

a largely ornamental value in some areas, and public works are sustained by forced labour. This, however, has been reduced by 75 per cent since 1945. There is widespread malnutrition and disease, particularly venereal disease. Some tribes are said to have 95 per cent endemic syphilis.

There is malnutrition also in the North, amongst the Bedouin. But a great contrast is provided in the Gezira, where the great cotton-growing irrigation scheme, now nationalised, pays 20 per cent of its profits to the Board, 40 per cent to the Sudan Government and 40 per cent to the tenants. Last year, each of nearly 30,000 tenants drew a net income of £700 (vast wealth in a country with so low a standard of living). This in itself creates problems—some tenants are leaving cultivation of their holdings largely to paid labour, some are even absentees living in Khartoum. The conditions of employed labour on the Gezira vary considerably. In the ginning factories, largely staffed by migrant labour—pilgrims on their way from West Africa to Mecca—conditions are reasonably good. Each worker gets a large midday meal with plenty of meat, and housing is much better than, for instance,

the 'labour lines' on many Malayan rubber plantations. The condition of workers employed by tenants, however, has received less attention.

#### *Education*

It is often argued by Northern Sudanese politicians that the British administration has deliberately kept the North divided from the South. There is an element of truth in this, in that education in the South is Christian in content and based on English. In the North it is Moslem and conducted in Arabic. In Gordon College—now the University College—which has an excellent record, there were in 1949 only two students from the south (where 2m. of the Sudan's 9m. people live). Even in the North, the need for education is still very great. The position of women, for example, is much worse than in most other Moslem countries, and female circumcision is almost universal, though illegal. But there is an educated minority which is larger and more mature than is generally realised, and in this respect the Sudan is much better fitted for self-government than, for example, Libya.

#### *Self-government This Year*

The Government's programme is to hold general elections within the next few months, to be followed by the transfer of power. Preparation has been made for this by the establishment of the Legislative Assembly and the appointment of Sudanese to the Executive Council. In the last few years, both have worked reasonably well. Apart from ten members elected to the Legislative Assembly by direct election in the larger towns and ten nominated members, the remaining 55 members have all been chosen by indirect election. So the mass of the population has had no experience of direct election. The Political Service is exceptionally able but strongly paternalistic in outlook, and some of those serving in it have taken little interest in the political education of the people. This must be borne in mind in assessing the practicability of the plebiscite on the future status of the Sudan which has been blessed by the Secretary-General to the United Nations and enthusiastically taken up by some of the politicians—the conditions for a true plebiscite hardly exist, and the question would have to be settled in local councils and by tribal chiefs.

#### *The Political Parties*

The principal dividing-line between the political parties is the Egyptian issue; corresponding with this division is a clash of personal and religious loyalties, the most influential figure in the 'pro-Egyptian' bloc (now itself split) being Sir Sayed Ali el Mirghani ('S.A.M.'), while Sir Sayed Abdel Rahman el Mahdi, son of the Mahdi ('S.A.R.'), leads the supporters of independence. These two notable men are the leaders of rival Moslem sects.

In the second group, the Umma party contains the most educated, responsible and experienced people, and undoubtedly constitutes the principal Sudanese party. Its leaders serve on the Executive Council and command a majority in the Legislative Assembly (which is boycotted by the 'pro-Egyptians'). Until quite recently, this party has been specially favoured by the British: 'S.A.R.' has been enabled by concessions of land and the control of pump schemes to become reputedly the richest man in the Sudan. The British hand is also suspected behind the newly-formed Socialist Republican Party, whose principal supporters are tribal chiefs with little knowledge of the principles of socialism.

The Government itself has spoken of Communist influence in the Sudan. There are some rather raw adolescent communist tendencies in the Trade Unions, though these are in better shape than might have been expected of Unions only two or three years old. Reports in the British press last December that the Workers' Federation had affiliated to the World Federation of Trade Unions were not accurate. The Federation had actually resisted a resolution to affiliate, and had instead passed an amendment expressing willingness to co-operate with trade union organisations throughout the world, 'including' the W.F.T.U. There are, however, some extremists who say that they hope to achieve their aims by violence.

#### *Relations With Egypt*

On the Egyptian issue, the majority of politically conscious people are wholeheartedly behind the administration in resisting any concession to Egyptian claims. Indeed, their principal fear is that Britain may 'do a deal' with Egypt at their expense (in order to secure the Canal Zone); if this should happen almost all the British officials and the Sudanese Ministers would immediately resign.

Even most of the 'pro-Egyptians' originally took this line as a tactical manœuvre against the British, in view of Egypt's quasi-colonial status.

This does not mean that—once independence is achieved—any responsible Sudanese will refuse to co-operate with Egypt. The most important problem, that of the Nile waters, has been amicably discussed many times on the technical level. At present the Sudan takes some  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent of the water; even the Egyptians admit that 7-8 per cent could be taken without impairing Egyptian needs, even allowing for future increases in the Egyptian population. The Sudanese simply want to make their own decision on their relations with Egypt and they should be able to do so by the end of this year, when self-government has been granted and they move on 'as rapidly as possible' to the 'ultimate goal' of self-determination.

# WHAT IS PARTNERSHIP?\*

THE concept of partnership, let alone the policy, has never been taken seriously by Africans in East Africa generally, and in Kenya in particular. The meaning given to this word by non-Africans in East Africa, and the practical demonstrations of 'partnership' as a policy, leave us in grave doubt as to whether they clearly understand its implications, or give it a proper definition.

The concept of partnership, as used in business, would assume that an equal or a proportionate contribution was made by the partners and that an equal or proportionate dividend was derived therefrom. It would mean also that there was a corresponding degree of responsibility and control for the partners, and this responsibility would not only refer to local operations, but extend into the international market.

Instances of partnership outside the commercial field may be found in the family system in India, or the communal system in some groups in East Africa. Here services rendered by the members assist in narrowing the gap between individuals, or groups, and check egoism and self-assertion—the sharpness of the individual demand is tempered by the moral demand for service to the members of the kinship group. Such a concept is a form of social security, and the birth of a child is always a joy, since it is regarded as an increase to the group, and never as 'just another mouth to feed,' as is sometimes the case in modern society. It is only a partnership with this kind of attitude which would have any real significance for Africans.

Sir Godfrey Huggins asserts that 'partnership' is practised in Southern Rhodesia, though he does not pretend that it is equal partnership. In his speech at Ndola on December 1, 1951, as quoted in *Venture*, January, 1952, he expresses his fear not so much that the 'Native may burn his fingers,' as that 'he may knock something over in the process and burn other people.' 'The success of our policy,' he said, 'is due to intimate day-to-day relations between our European Native Affairs Department officials, who in dealing with the native people, realise that they require leadership.' This, then, is the practical application of the theory of 'partnership,' which he has previously defined as being 'based on the total rejection of any policy of racial domination'! It is a relationship which differs in no essential respect from that of the relation between master and servant. Sir Godfrey remarks that the exact definition of partnership is difficult, if not dangerous. It is not so much difficult as dangerous, as all clarity of thought and speech is dangerous for those who wish to obscure unpleasant realities with pleasing words.

In Kenya the European minority state that their existence can be maintained only by their retaining complete control and leadership in the social, economic and political spheres. The European may

give the political rights and the African may receive them. These Europeans know no other way of life, or if they do, regard it contemptuously as a 'foreign mode of life.' The population of Kenya consists of many races—Indians who have inherited Indian culture, Arabs who derive their inspiration from Mohammedanism, Englishmen from Britain and from South Africa, and the indigenous African people. Each of these groups wishes to maintain its own way of life; each is unwilling to yield for the common good.

The only 'partnership' that we have known in Kenya is that of junior partners whose property has been seized by the senior partners, and who now work for the firm as labourers and office-boys for ten to thirty shillings a month. The question is, what have the senior partners contributed in order to justify their senior status? Sir Godfrey Huggins, discussing partnership in Rhodesia, said 'The Native has joined the firm and has his foot on the lower rungs of the ladder. He will have to learn the wisdom of trying to help himself, for we cannot carry the whole of his burden.' This inevitably reminds one of the cartoon of a European pioneer carried on a hammock on the bent shoulders of African bearers, struggling through forests and across rivers, while he writes his travel-book entitled *The White Man's Burden*. We do not ask the non-Africans to carry the 'burden' of our political direction, while we carry the 'burden' of their material and social privileges. This is not the sort of partnership which we want.

What is necessary in order to lead the way to better human relationships is the type of service which makes an individual indispensable to the whole community irrespective of sex, social status, or place of origin. The preparation and training given, in order to create active participants in such a society, would not be confined to the production of tame submissive semi-educated Africans, opposed by semi-educated reactionary European disciples of the 'Divide-and-Rule' deity.

In the beginning of the British rule in East Africa, we heard of 'Protection,' later of the 'paramountcy of African interests,' and many phrases have been coined to re-describe the relations between the ruler and the ruled, which remained basically unchanged. The latest from the mint has been 'partnership,' which suggests that the interests of the Africans are no longer 'paramount,' but merely 'equal.' The introduction of this term has been accompanied by no corresponding developments in East Africa, and in no way helps to clear the confusion created by the many phrases used previously. Why is this so? The reason is that partnership suggests equality, and this meaning has been deliberately stripped away from it.

What have the supposed partners in common? What do they put into a common pool? Until there is a desire on all sides to co-operate, and true tolerance so that each individual can give his or her best, 'partnership' will remain unreal.

**Mbiyu Koinange.**

\* See *Venture*, December, 1951, January, February and March, 1952, for previous contributions to this discussion.

# FACT

## THE INDIAN ELECTIONS

India has just completed its first elections under the new Constitution. The outgoing Parliament came into existence on December 9, 1946. On August 15, 1947, India gained its independence, and was also partitioned. Pakistan members then formed their own Parliament. The Indian Parliament continued to function as a legislative body and constituent assembly until the new constitution was inaugurated on January 26, 1950. Since that date, it has been a legislative body only, and the immense task of preparing for the elections has been performed. The elections were to the central House of the People, and to the Assembly and Electoral Colleges of the 26 States forming the Indian Union. Elections to the central Upper House, by members of Legislative Assemblies and Electoral Colleges in the States, took place last month. The elections to the central House of the People have been a great success for the illiterate voter. 'My respect for him,' said Pandit Nehru in February, 'has gone up... These elections have fully justified adult suffrage and the faith we put in our people.'

When results had been declared for 489 out of a total of 497 seats, it was announced that out of an electorate of 175m. 107,578,776 votes had been cast. Ten candidates were returned unopposed, the total number of candidates being 1,800. Invalid votes totalled nearly 2,052,000, or 1.90 per cent. The elections were conducted by means of symbols for the illiterate voters, and the response varied from district to district. In one Orissa constituency, a polling station set up in a dense forest area did not register a single vote on the first day of polling. Other constituencies polled more than 80 per cent. Women are believed to have polled more heavily than men, and took longer to cast their votes. One Hyderabad division reported that women were putting flowers on ballot boxes and offering prayers before casting their votes. Only 44 women contested seats for the House of the People.

A striking feature of the election was the defeat of communist candidates. The Indian National Congress won 363 seats (47,839,832 votes or 44.47 per cent of the total poll), and Independents 36 (15,521,746 votes). The Communists and allied parties won 27 seats (5,892,794 votes or 5.44 per cent), and Socialists 12 (11,009,740 votes or just under 10.23 per cent). The Hindu Mahasabha won only 4 (979,154 votes or 0.91 per cent), and the Scheduled Castes Federation only 2 (2,370,255 or 2.20 per cent). Except for Pandit Nehru and Dr. S. P. Mookherjee (Jan Sangh) all the leaders of All-India organisations were defeated. These included Mr. Asoka Mehta (Socialist), Dr. Ambedkar (Scheduled Castes Federation), Mr. S. A. Dange (Communist), and Dr. Khare (Hindu Maha-

sabha).<sup>\*</sup> The principal Communist successes were in the South. At the end of February it was announced that two Rulers—of Bilaspur and Bikanir—had been elected to Parliament and 14 to State Assemblies. Of these, six fought on Congress tickets. One, the ex-Maharaja of Jodhpur, fought as an Independent and defeated the Congress candidate, a former Bombay Minister, by over 100,000 votes. Some conception of the size of the electorate is given by the fact that Pandit Nehru polled 233,571 in Allahabad (64 per cent of the poll), and that the highest vote of 309,162 (77 per cent) was polled by a Communist in a Hyderabad constituency.

The elections started in October, 1951.

## THE GOLD COAST'S PRIME MINISTER

The Order in Council amending the Gold Coast Constitution was signed on March 10. The following explanation of the forthcoming changes was given in the Gold Coast Legislative Assembly by the Minister of Justice on March 5:-

'The Order in Council<sup>\*</sup>... will contain about 26 clauses. Of these, the principal clause will be that which provides that there shall be a Prime Minister. The remaining clauses will contain amendments to the Constitution Order in Council† resulting from the creation of the office of Prime Minister.

The amendment to the constitution is an important step towards full parliamentary government on the model of the United Kingdom and the Dominions. Under the existing provisions of the constitution... Representative Ministers are elected by the Assembly from names submitted by the Governor. Thereafter, a Leader of Government Business is elected by the Executive Council from amongst the Representative Ministers. The functions and powers of the Leader of Government Business are not set out in the constitution but are such as may be determined by the Governor acting in his discretion. The proposed amendment to the constitution will alter all this. The office of Leader of Government Business will be abolished. The Governor will present to the Assembly the name of a Member for election to the office of Prime Minister... The Leader of Government Business is elected by the Members of the Executive Council. The Prime Minister will, therefore, receive his mandate from the Assembly as a whole and not merely from his Ministerial colleagues. Following upon his election, the Prime Minister will proceed to consult with the Governor on the composition of the Cabinet.

\* Statutory Instruments. Gold Coast (Constitution) Order in Council, 1952. No. 455.

† Statutory Instruments. Gold Coast (Constitution) Order in Council, 1950. No. 2094.

After this consultation has taken place, the Governor will submit to the Assembly the names of Members for election as Ministers. These, with the *ex-officio* Ministers, will form the Executive Council, which will be known as the Cabinet. The Governor will preside but, as at present, will have no vote on the formation of the Cabinet.

The Governor will, under Section 22 of the old Constitution Order in Council, assign portfolios and departments to Representative Ministers but, under the proposed amendment to that section, he will only do this after consultation with the Prime Minister.

There are other functions of the Governor relating to Representative Ministers which, under the existing constitution, he exercises in his discretion. The powers to which I refer are a proposal by the Governor to the Executive Council that the appointment of a Representative Minister should be revoked under Sub-section 3 of Section 9; the vacating of the seat of a Representative Minister through absence from the Gold Coast without the permission of the Governor under Sub-section 1b of Section 10; the appointment of a person to be a temporary Representative Minister under Sub-section 3 of Section 13; the temporary assignment of Departments to another Representative Minister consequent upon the temporary inability of the responsible Minister to administer them under Section 24; the granting of leave of absence from his duties to a Representative Minister under Section 30. Under the proposed amendments to the constitution, these powers will only be exercisable by the Governor after consultation with the Prime Minister.

It will also be provided that the Prime Minister shall take precedence in the Cabinet next after the Governor, or the Officer Administering the Government, and that in the absence of the Governor or the Officer Administering the Government, he shall preside at Cabinet meetings.

There is a further important amendment resulting from the creation of the office of Prime Minister. It relates to Section 10 of the constitution, and provides that whenever a Prime Minister vacates his office, and a fresh appointment of a Prime Minister is made, all the remaining Representative Ministers shall vacate their offices also. In other words, a new election of a Prime Minister by the Assembly will also mean fresh elections of Representative Ministers by the Assembly. . . Under Section 10 of the constitution, it is laid down that Ministers shall continue in office after a dissolution of the Assembly until not less than four Ministers have been appointed from the newly-elected Assembly. This will be amended to provide that the Representative Ministers of the old Government shall continue in office after a dissolution of the Assembly until a new Prime Minister has been elected by the Assembly. . .

Amendments will also be made to Sections 25 and 26 of the Order in Council to provide for the Governor to consult with the Prime Minister before appointing, or terminating the appointment of, a Ministerial Secretary. . .

In conclusion, may I refer to a further proposed amendment which is not connected with the foregoing matters. It relates to the Government's intention to set up a local Gold Coast Public Service and the proposed amendment is to Section 57 of the Constitution Order in Council.'

## AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION IN JAMAICA

On December 4, 1951, the Jamaica House of Representatives passed a Bill providing for an Agricultural Development Corporation. Its duty will be to 'stimulate, facilitate and undertake the development of agriculture in Jamaica, subject to the general direction of the Governor in Executive Council. Its field of work includes fisheries, forestry, horticulture, and the use of land for livestock breeding, poultry farming and bee-keeping. The Governor in Council will appoint a chairman, deputy chairman, four to eight other members. The Corporation has borrowing powers subject to the approval of the Governor in Council, and advances and grants may be made to the Corporation as provided for in the Colony's estimates. The Corporation will be a statutory body and not merely advisory.

## THE POWER OF DISALLOWANCE

During the discussions on Central African Federation, much attention has been paid to the safeguard provided in the 1923 Constitution of Southern Rhodesia by the power of the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations to recommend to His Majesty the disallowance of discriminatory legislation. The following answer given in the House of Commons on January 31, 1952, throws light on the question of the strength or weakness of this safeguard:—

Mr. James Johnson asked the Under-Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations how often His Majesty's Government have evoked the safeguard in the Constitution of Southern Rhodesia regarding discriminatory legislation affecting Africans.

Mr. J. Foster: The Government of Southern Rhodesia invariably consult the Secretary of State before introducing legislation which applies to Africans provisions different from those applied to persons of European descent. The purpose of the safeguard is thus achieved by means of prior discussion, and it has never been necessary to advise the exercise of the power of disallowance.

Book May 24, 3 p.m., now.

Conference on

Co-operation in Asia and the Colonies

Speakers:

Mr. W. P. Watkins (Director of International Co-operative Alliance).

Lady Selwyn-Clarke (Assistant Secretary, Fabian Colonial Bureau).

Public Baths, Prince of Wales Rd., Kentish Town.

DELEGATE'S FEE, 6d. (with postage 7½d.).

# M A L T A , G . C . , 1 9 5 2

THE essential fact about Malta is that its spiritual centre is Rome and not London. Official British opinion does not, of course, make any attempt to alter this state of affairs, but it is quite impossible to ignore it in any discussion of the island's future.

Even Dom Mintoff's Labour Party, against which Communist leanings used to be alleged, begins its statement of policy with the firm assertion that 'In all our actions we take our inspiration from the teachings of Our Lord Jesus Christ, as propounded by the Roman Catholic Church.' So much for the chances of Communism rearing as much as the top of its scalp.

The greatest problem is over-population, which is summed up in the only paragraph devoted to Malta in the Central Office of Information's survey of the United Kingdom Dependencies in 1951:—

'The extent of Malta's over-population may be judged from the fact that the islands, in area about the size of the Isle of Wight, carried a population of 312,500 at the beginning of 1951. Despite the fact that 22,000 Maltese have emigrated in the last four years, the population increased by some 4,000 in the same period. There has, however, been evidence more recently that this trend has been reversed. In the first nine months of 1951, the rate of emigration caused the population to drop by 1,121, but it is by no means certain that emigration will be maintained at the rate necessary to cause a substantial decrease in population so desirable on economic grounds.'

It is almost certain that emigration will not bring about any decrease at all, let alone a substantial one. And it is here that the Church clamps down most firmly and most markedly, for it not only forbids birth control but preaches prolificacy. The Government, toeing the line, forbids the importation of contraceptives, with the result that, in 1949, the families with eleven and more children slightly outnumbered the one-child families.

How can this population be supported? The latest available trade figures are for the quarter ending September, 1951, during which imports totalled £9,739,000 against exports and re-exports totalling £789,000, an adverse ratio of over twelve to one. Malta has negligible natural resources, and to say that the future lies with small industries will not do. These are needed, but one cannot see the present population being sustained by them.

It is not surprising that invisible exports are sought and that there is always a rather neulous, hopeful body of opinion which believes that much could be made of the island as a tourist resort. Reliance cannot be placed on this, though Malta has a lot to offer in the way of historical interest for a small island. It is inaccessible to those Europeans who would want its sunshine, and its facilities for tourists are inadequate.

Wherein, then, lies any hope? The old idea that Britain could not afford to let this fortress slide into

a state of dire poverty must give way to the certainty that now Britain cannot continue to pay out unconditional grants on the scale she has done since the war. Action from within is needed.

## The British Serviceman

There is a new unpremeditated factor emerging which may promote this action. In the last few years many hundreds of British Service families have come to the island under the new schemes of payments of travelling expenses and overseas allowances. This has enabled the Maltese to see at close quarters a good cross-section of British family life and to gauge how their standards compare with ours. They see that the British limit their families and that British wives and children receive free medical treatment under the National Health Scheme. They see our children taken to schools in buses provided free by the Services and given free education down to the provision of exercise-books and pencils. In these and various other ways they see much to envy, though one must not be so smug as to claim that they approve of all or even the majority of our ways.

Now Socialism, or anything remotely like it, is given a very black name here. But it seems to me that this will not prevent a comparison being made between British and Maltese social services and the emergence of the idea that a good deal of betterment is possible locally. A significant fact is that a tribunal has just awarded a substantial wage increase to Government employees and in determining the increase took into account not only the increase in the cost of living, but also recognised an improvement in 'the mode of living' of the workers. The next stage would be the realisation that no great improvement in the standard of living is possible merely by a 'fair shares for all' policy, and that whereas the National Lottery may be considered as a useful source of external revenue, the numerous gambling games which the Government sponsors or taxes are merely a waste of time, and the revenue cannot compensate for a lack of real productive effort.

Attention is already turning to the need for local action. There have been suggestions made for an accurate survey of Malta's economic potential, and the need for stable government has been pointed out. Politics in Malta have been factious, and the present Government is an unstable coalition with the Nationalist Party and Malta Workers' Party working together. The next step must be a co-operative effort in which the business elements realise that all the inhabitants of the island are members one of another in a sense other than the spiritual one.

J. J. Y.

## UNITING TOGOLAND?

THE announcement that a Joint Council for Togoland Affairs is to be formed brings to the fore once more the confusion that has arisen in this small area on the West African coast which was once a political slice of land carved out of Africa by Germany, and then divided in half by France and Britain in 1918.

While Britain has attempted to solve the problems of her half by integrating the natural economic and ethnic regions with their continuations across the border in the Gold Coast, the international status of Togoland—first as a mandated and now as a Trust Territory—has tended to develop a political consciousness divergent from economic facts. Attempts to develop political units which have no economic significance are almost bound to fail, as the sad example of Europe's own Succession States might indicate. Yet even to-day, any attempt at the economic integration of Togoland with the Gold Coast is regarded with suspicion as just another manifestation of British imperialism, by many countries at the United Nations. There is suspicion also amongst Togolanders themselves. The United Nations Visiting Mission in 1948 was met with complaints that Togoland cocoa farmers were served by the Gold Coast Cocoa Marketing Board, whose functions were apparently little understood. There was little realisation, also, that Togoland had received more than its due share of funds from the revenue of the Gold Coast.

Only representatives of the Gold Coast's African government can dispel such misapprehensions. The possibility that a Trust Territory might be wholly or partially absorbed by a self-governing African state was not envisaged by the United Nations. But it is a present fact which is viewed with apprehension by some Togolanders. A similar problem arises in the Cameroons, where the British part of the Trust Territory is administered together with Nigeria.

Although there has been an increasing demand by politically active groups in Togoland for independence and unity, there has been little agreement on how this should be achieved. While the Northern tribesmen would on the whole prefer to be amalgamated with their brothers across the Gold Coast border, the central area—probably politically the most awake—wants a united Togoland, independent of the Gold Coast. Its representative bodies have pointed out that the African Coussey Committee made no provision in the Gold Coast constitution for Togolanders to be represented as such in the central legislature, and they suspect absorption, both political and economic.

In the south, however, the Ewes, who constitute

about a third of Togoland's population, want unity either with the Ewes of the Gold Coast, or of French Togoland, or with both. Union with the Gold Coast would not only unite 60 per cent of all the Ewes, but would encourage them economically, since the Volta scheme is to be carried out in their land. But the French, in their turn, not unnaturally think that the 60 per cent would exert a fatal pull on the remaining 40 per cent of Ewes under their jurisdiction, and indeed some suspect the British of encouraging this movement. They point out, quite logically, that this would not be the end. What then of the Hausas divided between Nigeria and French Niger? of the Woloffs divided between Gambia and French Senegal?

The British Government has so far been content to consider solutions within the existing framework, because 'it is conclusively demonstrated that no solution involving an alteration of boundaries or of political allegiance can currently be proposed which commands the general assent of the peoples of the two territories or even the agreement of the majority.'\* In particular, 'it has never been made clear how the aim of pan-Ewe unification can be reconciled with the aim of unifying the two Togolands as a separate entity.'

Britain and France are therefore attempting to replace the old consultative commission by a joint council consisting of six representatives from British and 15 from French Togoland. This, though far from being the sovereign legislative body which is sometimes demanded, is, with its allocation of funds, more than a purely advisory body. It is to meet twice yearly, once in each territory, 'to discuss and advise the Administering Authorities on the co-ordination of development plans in frontier areas, the amelioration of conditions caused by the existence of the frontier, and other matters of common concern.'

Although the more extremist politicians are urging their dissatisfaction with this moderate arrangement on UNO, it does not seem that this body can offer a more constructive solution at present. The continual stream of petitions which it has been receiving for years from Togoland sheds more heat than light on the general situation. It is impossible to assess the value of accusation and counter-accusation, or the virtue of a case, by the length and invective of cables. Complicated and rival claims can in the end only be dealt with on the spot. It is obvious that no immediate and satisfactory solution can be found for Togoland's problems; but given time and peace, Togoland could develop to take its place in a West African Federation of States which will allow sufficient regional autonomy to satisfy the most obdurate of minorities.

*Molly Mortimer.*

479

\* United Nations, T/931.

# Guide to Books

## The Sacred State of the Akan.

By Eva L. R. Meyerowitz. (Faber & Faber. 42/-.)

Fabians who are tempted to regard Africa as a mere problem in applied economics are invited to read this book. Mrs. Meyerowitz is an artist, a sculptor, who lived some years in the Gold Coast, and started an investigation into the gold of Ashanti, which soon branched into general enquiry, when she realised that gold was merely symbolic of *kra*, the spirit. Her main findings in this first book may appear perfectly simple (even though they are a long way removed from the mind that stops short at the Welfare State). In the beginning, perhaps around the year A.D. 800, and in the Sahara, the remote ancestors of the Akan people worshipped a Queen-Mother, sole life giver and temporal ruler, with a matrilineal descent and taboos based on the *abusua*, the blood, the female principle. Later her son ruled jointly with her (the period of migrations?). Next, the patrilineal concept of *ntoro*, or spirit, with its own system of symbols and taboos, marked the further decline of the Queen-Mother. Finally, the King stood forth as war-lord and master of a state (*oman*) based on a territorial and military confederacy. All this is familiar to the student of anthropology, especially in the Middle East and in the Greece of the heroic period. What is to be remembered is that it is actual for the Ashanti to-day. Every Ashanti belongs to one of the eight clans (*abusua*) with their recognised duties; every Ashanti also belongs to a *ntoro*, though women may have two, that of their husband as well as their father. This is, of course, the mere ABC. We are dealing with a different civilisation, with its own deities, its own ceremonies, the doctrines and the symbols that permeate every side of life. *Kra*, the spirit, *sunsum*, the ego, *saman*, the ghostly presence, *heybea*, the unconscious will, *nkrabea*, the personal will, a calendar of 40 days: all these are intelligible when listed, but not in their interacting proliferations. The most incredible complication derives from the symbols, with which Mrs. Meyerowitz, as an artist, is perhaps principally concerned. They derive from the lost cities of Bono-Mansu and Twifo-Heman, built south of the Volta River and destroyed 200-300 years ago, cities with an architecture of European proportions, colonnades, friezes, pillars, dead kings whose skeletons were jointed; all the elaboration of a decadent court: the *crux decussata*, the spiral emblems of the moon and the solstices, detail so fine that it regards as significant the number of petals on a flower. Mrs. Meyerowitz claims that the (Original) 7 clans follow the planets, and that all the (stone) cities were intended to reproduce the solar system, with 12 main streets, the chief axis North and South, the gates facing the rising sun. She discusses the origins of the golden weights, Portuguese or Indian, or possibly from 'Rhadamite Jews from Persian Rhaga.' No doubt, the reformer will say that this whole world is collapsing. What we also have to

remember is the close knit riches of its organisation, its continuous lively interest, compared with the spiritual emptiness of so much of industrial civilisation. Mrs. Meyerowitz is not everywhere as clear as perhaps she might be. Her language is figurative and often romantic (the 'Cliffs of Banfora,' the 'Chapel of the Stools'), but she is everywhere stimulating, everywhere possessed of the truth of poetry and science together. Above all, she provides a dynamic interpretation of Ashanti society which explains many things to one baffled by the empirical presentation of Rattray, the last of the European visitors who went at all deeply into the culture of the Akan.

H. V. L. S.

## SHORT NOTICES

**Let's Join the Human Race.** By Stringfellow Barr. (University of Chicago Press. 25 cents.) In simple, forthright language the author seeks to enlighten American public opinion on the main cause of world unrest, which, he argues, lies in the fact that the two-thirds of mankind living mainly in the under-developed areas of Asia, Africa and Latin America are to-day increasingly aware that their economic problems can largely be solved by using the new scientific knowledge and technical skills available for the first time in human history. Preventable misery will no longer be endured. American policy, with specific reference to President Truman's Point Four, is criticised as doomed to failure because based on false assumptions. The size of the problem and the desire of peoples to co-operate as far as possible in improving their conditions are evidence that America should abandon a Santa Claus attitude and turn to promoting a World Development Authority on the co-operative lines tested in the TVA project.

**The Healthy Village.** An Experiment in Visual Education in West China. (Monographs on Fundamental Education: V. UNESCO, Paris.) Health problems were selected for this UNESCO-China project carried out in Szechuan, 1949, because these 'are nearer to being alike throughout China and around the globe than other questions of fundamental education.' It is hoped that the experiments in devising and using 'educational tools' will prove useful to health workers in any part of the world where visual aids are required. The tools described include Static Posters, Wallsheets, etc., Picture Books, Mobile Devices, Filmstrips and Filmslides, Animated Movies.

**The Gold Coast Election.** by J. H. Price. (Bureau of Current Affairs, West African Affairs Series. 9d.) An outline of the events leading up to the present constitution in the Gold Coast is given as an introduction, but the bulk of the pamphlet deals with the organisation of the elections, the composition of the Legislative Assembly and the election manifestoes of the contending parties. A most useful document, which could with advantage be read in other Colonies where the introduction of an electoral system is still in the future.

# Parliament

**House Building in Singapore.** Mr. Popplewell asked how many houses and flats were built in Singapore during 1951; what percentage of the house-building target was represented; and what steps were proposed to deal more effectively with this urgent problem. Mr. Lyttelton said that 1,180 flats and quarters had been built by public authorities and 2,030 were still under construction at the end of the year. The Singapore Improvement Trust's target for 1951 had been 2,238 homes, but, in fact, all housing which had been completed in 1951 had been only the backlog from the previous year. Mr. Lyttelton added that he shared the deep concern of the Government of Singapore at the housing shortage, which was a problem demanding imaginative planning and vigorous execution. He would ask the new Governor to give this matter special attention. (Feb. 27.)

**Subsidised House-building.** Mr. Popplewell asked whether in view of Singapore's record budget surplus, he would press the Government there to adopt a policy of subsidies for house-building projects. Mr. Lyttelton replied that Government loans to the Singapore Improvement Trust so far totalled £2,624,000. These were at specially low rates of interest and constituted an indirect subsidy. The question of further subsidisation was now being considered by the Singapore Government as part of their general plans for rehousing. (Feb. 27.)

**Artisans from the Gold Coast in the United Kingdom.** Mr. Sorensen asked whether consideration had been given to the need for arranging groups of artisans to visit this country for further training and experience similar to the scheme promoted by the Gold Coast and now being operated in this country. Mr. Lyttelton replied that consideration was not at present being given to further schemes for the training of groups of artisans in the United Kingdom, though training was arranged from time to time as the need arose. Colonial Governments in general relied on the local facilities available in technical colleges and departmental trade schools for the training of artisans. (Feb. 27.)

**Kenya Trade Unions Bill—Consultation.** Mr. Wallace asked what consultation had taken place between the Government and the trade unions on the drafting of the Trade Unions Bill. Mr. Lyttelton replied that the Bill had been under consideration for the past two years by the Kenya Labour Advisory Board, on which there were employees' representatives. It had been published on the 8th January for public comment and copies had been specially sent to the trade unions. Mr. Awbery, in a supplementary question, asked whether the Minister would give consideration to the advisability of sending out to Kenya a few trade unionists in conjunction with the T.U.C. so that they could give advice to the workers in the Colony. Mr. Lyttelton said that he believed that public opinion was being informed upon this matter

in the consultations that were taking place with various trade union leaders, but that he would not at all exclude the possibility suggested. (Feb. 20.)

**Trade Union Officials and Literacy in English.** Mr. Wallace enquired why the Kenya Trade Unions Bill included a provision that the secretary or treasurer of a trade union applying for registration must be literate in English; and if he would make representations with a view to the deletion of this provision. Mr. Lyttelton said he was consulting the Governor of Kenya and would communicate on receiving his reply. (Feb. 20.)

**East and Central Africa Wages Board.** In reply to a question by Mr. John Hynd, Mr. Lyttelton said that standing advisory boards with wage-fixing functions covering the whole territory or whole provinces exist in Kenya, Nyasaland and Uganda. Ad hoc wages boards existed in Northern Rhodesia to determine the wages of African labourers in building and civil engineering in the Copperbelt, of African shop assistants in the Eastern Province, and of Asian shop assistants. Ad hoc wages boards had also been set up in Zanzibar to advise on minimum wages for dairy workers in producing, packing and bagging, for carters, and for tailors. (Feb. 20.)

**Tanganyika and a Trade Union Adviser.** In reply to a question by Mr. John Rankin, Mr. Lyttelton said that it was not proposed at present to appoint a trade union adviser in Tanganyika. It was part of the duties of the Labour Department to assist the trade union movement and officers were appointed from time to time to that Department who had had practical experience of trade union work in the United Kingdom. Mr. Armet, of the National Union of Seamen, was the most recent appointment to the Department to deal with trade union matters. (Feb. 20.)

**Purchase of Land by Members of the Colonial Service.** Mr. John Rankin asked whether, as the extent of the present practice was causing much discontent among the native peoples, the Secretary of State would consider revising the regulations under which members of the Colonial Service were allowed to buy land. Mr. Lyttelton replied that members of the Colonial Service could buy land only if the Governor of the territory concerned was satisfied that the officer's private affairs would not thereby be brought into real or apparent conflict with his public duties; that he could see no reason for revision of the regulations. Their local application in the widely varying circumstances of different territories was a matter for the Governors. (March 5.)

**West Indian Federation Conference.** In reply to a question by Mr. Smithers, Mr. Lyttelton said that he had invited all the Governments concerned to send representatives to a conference in London this summer. A despatch setting out his detailed plans for this conference had been published. (Feb. 27.)

## A Revival in Hong Kong

LITTLE news of a constructive nature reaches us from this outpost of Empire—there are still no constitutional changes to report and Hong Kong figures in the news mainly in terms of trade. But here is an account of a voluntary association of Chinese, which has sprung up in the last two years, founded on the conception of the *Kaifong* of old but with a new drive towards social service.

The *Kaifong* is part of China's history. It functioned as a group of residents in a particular locality, with its own leaders neither elected nor appointed but who naturally came to the fore to undertake the practical responsibilities of repairing bridges, mending roads, providing free medical aid for the poor and free coffin services for the destitute dead. In Hong Kong before the war the tradition of the *Kaifong* survived in the provision of public dispensaries, the promotion of primary education and in free burials. The Japanese occupation wiped out the remnants of *Kaifong* work in the colony.

But the spirit of the *Kaifong* was not dead. In the crowded industrial district of Shamshuiipo on the mainland, some local Chinese gentlemen believed that the *Kaifong* could be reborn to serve the need of social welfare outside the present provision by Government. Organisation was tackled with vigour, and resulted in the formation of a pioneer Association with elected officers. A formal inauguration ceremony publicly launched the new *Kaifong*. Fifteen other districts rapidly followed the example of Shamshuiipo and there are now 100,000 members. Membership of the Associations are open to all over 20, who live or work in factories, shops or houses in the district, irrespective of nationality or sex. They must be of good conduct with no bad habits, of sound mind, and willing to work faithfully and loyally for the welfare of the neighbourhood. They must agree to the Association's regulations and obey resolutions passed by the majority. A Supervisory Committee of not more than 15, who are usually highly respected elderly members, is elected to check all financial transactions and enquire into the faithfulness and zeal with which the Executive Committee carries out the Association's

affairs. After a considerable time-lag, women's sections were formed which now have a membership of about 600.

The activities of the *Kaifongs* have been extraordinarily varied. In the recent fire, the Kowloon City *Kaifong* collected over H.K. \$227,000 (approximately £14,000) and 15,000 sufferers from the fire received more warm clothing than they needed. Thirteen free evening schools for 3,000 children, and domestic science and needlework classes have been organised. Additional divisions of St. John's Ambulance Brigade, public health work, particularly anti-tuberculosis, clinics, paying for beds in private maternity homes for poor mothers, provision of recreation grounds and sports equipment have all come within the scope of the Associations.

Strong representations have been made to Government on matters that should be dealt with by Government and action has been taken by the *Kaifong* Welfare Associations where Government has been too dilatory in attending to their grievances. Housing is being tackled for squatters, who are mainly refugees from China, by the Associations loaning money for building stone or brick huts on a non-profit basis to those who can afford to pay back the loan in instalments. This energetic attempt to deal with one of the most serious problems of this over-crowded Colony is welcomed both by citizens and squatters, since the lack of sanitation and the constant fires in the squatter areas have been a constant source of danger in the Colony.

The Government Social Welfare Department has encouraged the development of the *Kaifongs* tactfully and unobtrusively, giving practical assistance when needed, whilst not interfering with the Chinese conception of organisation and welfare. The Department has played a particularly valuable rôle in interpreting the aims and the activities of the *Kaifongs* to the press and other Government Departments.

This post-war revival of the Hong Kong *Kaifong* is one of the most important features in the strenuous life of a Colony harassed by periodic influxes of refugees.

**Hilda Selwyn-Clarke.**

### CONTENTS OF THIS NUMBER

For Reference	April, 1952
<i>Comment</i> —	
The Gold Coast Answers Malan	1
A Matter of Mechanics	2
West Indian Federation	2
Strike in Malta	3
Tom Driberg, M.P., on <i>The Sudan</i>	3
What is Partnership? by Mbiyu Koinange	5
<i>Fact</i> —	
The Indian Elections	6
The Gold Coast's Prime Minister	6
Agricultural Development Corporation in Jamaica	7
The Power of Disallowance	7
Malta, G.C., 1952	8
Trusteeship Column—Uniting Togoland?	9
Guide to Books	10
Parliament	11

**FABIAN**

**COLONIAL BUREAU**

**II Dartmouth Street, London, SW1**

**Annual Subscription to Bureau . . 20s.  
(including Venture)**

**Full-time Students' Subscription . 10s.**

**Annual Subscription to Venture only 7/6d.**

**Further details of membership from the Secretary**